MONOLOGUES

MAY ISABEL FISK

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MAY ISABEL FISK

Monologues

by

May Isabel Fisk

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Contents

	PAGE
Keeping a Seat at the Benefit	3
Her First Call on the Butcher	21
Hunting for an Apartment	31
The Heart of a Woman	55
A Bill from the Milliner	81
A Woman in a Shoe-shop	99
Another Point of View	113
Mis' Deborah Has a Visitor	123
The Pudding	145
The Year After	159
Heard on the Beach	177

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Keeping a Seat at the Benefit

Keeping a Seat at the Benefit

NEVER mind, usher, never mind. I see two seats; I think I can get there before that fat woman does.

[*Rushes forward, seats herself in one chair, placing her umbrella in the other. Breathlessly:*

Thank goodness, I've got them. [*As fat woman approaches.*] . . . Yes, I've taken both. I'm sorry. . . . I beg your pardon, I'm keeping this seat for a friend. . . . This seat occupied?—I—oh, I understand. No, but I'm keeping it for a friend. . . . Yes, it's engaged; I'm keeping

it for a friend. I expect her every moment. . . . Well, I wish she'd come. This is most unpleasant. . . . Excuse me, madam, but I'm keeping this seat. . . . But you see my umbrella's on it, and I never put an umbrella on a chair unless I'm keeping it for a friend. I expect— [*She turns.*] Why, there she is now—so sorry.

[*Hails some one in distance. Pantomime and loud whisper.*

Got a seat. Got a seat. . . . I beg your pardon, I'm keeping this seat for a friend. . . . Oh my! I—I— How dreadful! I thought it was the friend I'm waiting for. I don't know how I could have made such a mistake, but, don't you know, so many women seem to look alike with their hats on! So stupid!

[*Unobserved, old lady takes vacant seat.*

I beg your pardon, but I'm keeping this seat for a friend. [*Louder.*] I beg your pardon, but I'm keeping this seat for a friend. . . . Don't you hear? . . . Oh, you're deaf. . . . Goodness! I never talked into one of those things before! Er—I—er— . . . No, I haven't said anything yet. I'm just thinking what I'm going to say.

I once had a grandmother who was very deaf. . . . You are not very deaf? No, no, I didn't think you were. What I meant to say was, I'd like to give you this seat, but I'm keeping it for a friend. . . . What? You are glad to keep it? No, no. I said I was keeping it for a friend. . . . You're pleased to be friends? Oh no! I said I—am—keeping—this—seat — for — a — friend — and I shall have to ask you to get up. . . . I didn't mean to

offend you. Now she's going off mad. I never will try to keep a seat for any one again. . . .

Boy, boy, programme boy, what time is it? . . . Five minutes of two? They are to commence at two, aren't they? . . . Well, they never do commence on time, do they? . . . Come back; wait a minute. Now, do you mean two o'clock by your time or the time down on the stage? Couldn't you find out?

And, boy, if you see a lady in a dark skirt and a light waist, who seems to be looking for some one, won't you please tell her I'm here, 'way up in the second balcony, round by the stage? And— Boy, boy, come back here! I want a programme. . . .

I beg your pardon, I'm keeping this seat for— Twenty-five cents! Well, I

don't want it. I never heard of charging twenty-five cents for a programme. . . . I don't care if it is a benefit. Besides, all those you want to hear never come, and they fill up with anybody, and . . . I'm keeping this seat for a friend. . . . No, I don't think there is any rule about it. Of course, if the performance begins before my friend comes, I— . . . It's not two o'clock yet. . . . Well, it may be by your watch, but it's not by the programme boy's time, and they are going to begin by his time, and be late at that. . . . I don't care to quarrel over a question of that description with an utter stranger. But I certainly shall *not* give up this seat! . . . They are your seats? You will see an usher about it? By all means, by all means. . . . Your opinion is a matter of utter indifference to me!

. . . No, I am keeping this seat for a woman who was once my friend. I beg you will pardon my being so upset, but that woman over there—the one in the hideous red hat just going around the corner — fairly insulted me because I wouldn't give up these seats. . . .

Yes, yes—I'd be very glad to have your little boy sit here while you look for seats. You see, when you are really sitting in them they can't turn you out. What a dear little man he is! I'm so fond of children. . . . All right, take your time. . . . There, upsy-daisy—now sit still. . . . Yes, you can hold the umbrella, but don't thump on the floor with it. Ouch! That went right on my foot. Don't do that again. . . . Oh, I wouldn't do that—little gentlemen don't put umbrella handles in their mouths. That isn't nice for little

men to stand in seats. . . . Well, perhaps your mamma does let you, but you sha'n't do it while you're with me. Now, get down—get down! . . . Don't cry! Don't cry! Don't scream so! Everybody is looking at us. . . . Stand up again if you want to—eat the umbrella if you like, but stop screaming. . . . Don't run away. You can't find your mamma in this crowd, and you've got my umbrella. Come back—come back! . . . What am I going to do? If I leave, some one will take the seats, and if I don't chase that little imp I'll lose my umbrella. I'd better go. . . . Here, you naughty boy, give me my umbrella. You are very, very wicked — you will never go to heaven. . . . You dreadful child — where did you learn such perfectly awful language? Just you find your

mother. Don't you dare come back here.

. . . Just as I thought! I beg your pardon, ladies, but these are my seats. . . . Of course you have only my word for it. You see, I was sitting in one and keeping the other for a friend, and just now I had to go after that naughty little umbrella that had run away with my boy. You see, his mother had left it— . . . Don't I make myself clear? . . . She went to look for others, and— . . . Thank you very much. Now I come to think of it, I don't remember exactly whether I was to keep a seat for my friend or she was to keep one for me. . . . Oh no, I wouldn't care to give up the seats until I was sure which way it was. You might come back. . . . There she is, there she is. [*Beckons frantically.*

Madeline, why didn't you come before? You know when I say I'll be at a certain place at a certain time I'm always there, and here I've waited for ages and been insulted by a horrid woman in a red hat; once a deaf old woman, a perfectly nice old woman, was insulted unintentionally by me; and—once— Well, at least explain why you didn't come and— . . . Your Nora's left? Well, I won't say I thought she would, my dear, but I do believe in treating a servant like a human being. I certainly hope you will get one this time you can keep. Where did you go? . . . Oh, I'm sorry you went to Mrs. Casey's; her girls are no good at all. They simply won't stay. . . . I ought to know— I had six cooks from her last month; they wouldn't stay.

Now which seat do you want—this one?

I don't care at all. Perhaps you— . . . It doesn't matter one particle. . . . Just as you like. . . . Very well. [*They sit down.*

You know that waist looks as well on you as anything I've ever seen you have on. You can wear those stripes running round, having no fig— I mean, being so slender. I can't at all. Where did you get the material? . . . Not there, really? Such a common store, I didn't know you could get anything decent there. . . . I— oh—I was there only once, and then not to buy anything for myself—I was just getting some Christmas presents for Mr. Stewart's family.

. . . It must be heavenly, but we can't have a thing fried in lard—not a thing. Of course I like it, but on account of Mr. Stewart's dyspepsia. My dear, you don't know what you're spared, having a hus-

band without dyspepsia. . . . Yours has what? . . . Oh, golf! That's nothing—he can't have that with him all the time.

What did you think of the Davises' euchre? . . . That's just what I said to Mr. Stewart. If you can't give a thing right, don't give it at all. . . . How did you like the chicken salad? . . . Well, I was suspicious of it, and that night when we got home Mr. Stewart had the most awful attack. That settled it. I said right away the chicken that made that salad never had feathers—not much—four legs and hair. . . . Veal, of course. . . . What did you think of the prizes? . . . That olive-dish? . . . No, it wasn't—it looked so, but I went up and felt of it.

What's that rumbling? I suppose it's commencing. I can't see one thing but that little door on the side of the stage

and the man with the cymbals. I think it's a ridiculous idea, anyway, having a benefit in a theatre! If I'd been consulted— . . . Oh yes, I was asked, even begged, to go on the committee, but I wouldn't. The people who don't do anything always sit around and criticise those that get the thing up; and I must say this affair is about the worst managed I ever attended—no one seems to know his business.

If this woman in front of me is going to stand up, I am too. . . . [*Turns to woman back of her.*] I'm sorry, madam, but you see this lady in front of me is standing up, and I'm sure if she does I don't know why I shouldn't. So why don't you stand up? . . . Oh, very well. [*Seats herself angrily.*] Madam, if you must stand up, would you mind taking your hat off? . . . Thank

you. . . . [*To woman back of her.*] Certainly. [*Removes her hat.*] [*To friend.*] That disagreeable woman is bent on annoying me. She can't see, anyway, so what earthly good does it do her for me to take my hat off? Just spite. Well, I'm going to have one look at that stage, anyway. [*Rises hastily.*] There goes my hat in that woman's seat! [*Taps arm of woman in front.*] I beg— . . . [*To woman back of her.*] I'm only standing up for one moment to have one look at the stage. [*Turns.*] You're sitting on my hat! . . . Of course you didn't do it intentionally, but it's just as hard on the hat. Oh, don't say anything more about it. You see, I just dropped it, and was going to call your attention to it when this person asked me to sit down.

Now, Madeline, look at that hat. . . .

Oh, it's very well to say put a bow on here and a flower there. I should never feel the same in it again. I never could bear to wear a hat that had been sat on. I had an aunt once who— . . . Please don't say another word about it; I know it wasn't your fault.

I don't feel, Madeline, as though I could enjoy anything now. There comes that horrid woman in the red hat again. She has an usher with her.

. . . What! These seats are reserved! Why wasn't I told of it before? It is a very strange thing that people with reserved seats shouldn't come earlier—I am very glad, though, to give them to you. Usher, where can I find other seats? . . . Not another in the house? Well, it's very strange management to pack a house so that you can't get a seat! It's a

perfect outrage, after all the trouble I had to keep these seats, and getting my hat sat on, and being insulted by no end of people! I don't see anything to do but for us to go home. I hope you will enjoy the seats!

[*Exit with a flounce.*

Her First Call on the Butcher

Her First Call on the Butcher

She enters, shakes skirt free of sawdust, and wrinkles nose in disgust. She moves uncertainly, finally points at one man.

YOU, if you please. Good-morning. I want to look at something for dinner. . . . Oh, I don't know what I want—just show me what you have. . . . Of course I can't tell what I want till I see what you have, and even then it's very hard. . . . Yes, just us two. . . . Well, the platter we use ordinarily for dinner—I don't use the best set for

every day, but this one is really very pretty, white with little pink roses—Well, it's about so long and so wide, and I would like something to fill it nicely. . . . I can't think of one thing. What are these? . . . Chops? Well, I never saw chops growing in bunches before. . . . I don't care—when I was at home we often had chops, but they weren't like that, but sort of one and one, with little bits of parsley around them. . . . You cut them up? Oh—oh—oh— I suppose different butchers have different ways. . . .

I don't think I care for that kind of chops, anyway—I mean those with the little tails. I like the ones with the long, thin bones. . . . French chops? Oh no, they weren't imported—oh no, because the cook used to go out any time and get

them. . . . Oh—oh—oh—you do? . . . They are? . . . I see. . . . I'll take some. . . . How many?—oh—I—er— Why, about as many as you usually sell. . . . Well, let me see—Mr. Dodd generally eats about a dozen oysters at a time—I don't mean all at once, you know—so for both of us I think about two dozen. . . . Oh, I can send for more if that isn't enough.

You are quite sure you have the best —best—description of chops? . . . Well, you see, our cook, Lillian—such an odd name for an Irish cook—I mean our cook at home before I was married — she wanted me to employ the same butcher we had then, but as I told mamma then, I thought it was more a matter of sentiment with Lillian than meat. She was the most disobliging girl except when it came

to buying chops, and she was always only too ready to run out after them. One afternoon I was just going up the steps —I had been to a tea, I think—anyway, I know I'd had an awfully stupid time. Well, there was Lillian at the area gate talking to a man who had "chops" written all over him. So when Lillian said— [*Turns.*] I'm in great haste myself, madam. [*To butcher.*] You will kindly finish waiting on me before you attend to any one else. Where did I leave off? Oh yes. He was a little, thick-set man with black, curly hair and mustache. Do you know him? . . . Oh, I thought probably all butchers knew one another. . . .

I would like to look at some chickens, please. . . . Why, it hasn't any feathers! . . . It did? . . . You have? . . . It was? . . .

Oh—oh—oh. I don't like the color—it seems very yellow. . . . Because it's fat? Well, I don't want a fat chicken—neither Mr. Dodd nor myself eat a bit of fat. . . . Oh—oh—oh. I can't help it—I don't like the color of that chicken—you'll pardon my saying so, but it does look very bilious. Why, what are you breaking its bones for? I wouldn't take it now under any circumstances. . . . Perhaps, but Mr. Dodd wouldn't like me to buy a damaged chicken. There, I like those chickens hanging up. . . . No, no, not that one—farther along—no—yes, yes, that's it—the blue-looking one with the large face. . . . I don't care, I like its looks much better than the other one. Now, let me see—there was something I wanted to tell you about that chicken—wait a minute —I'll have it directly—I've been taking

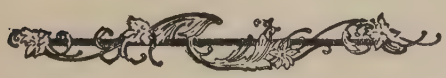
a course of memory lessons. M—m—m —something about a boat—a tiller, a centre-board, a sheet, a sail, a mainsail—that's almost it—a ji—ji—a jib—that's it—giblets! Be sure to send the giblets.

Where's my list? I thought I put it in my bag, but— No, I can't find it. Isn't that exasperating! I remember making it out, and then I laid a little sample of white silk with a black figure in it on the desk—yes, I remember perfectly. Oh yes, and then the sample or the list—you see, the sample with the thin, black figure really looked like the list. Well, one or the other must have fallen on the floor, for I remember, too, my little dog chewing something as I came out—yes, that must have been it. . . . It really doesn't matter specially.

Mr. Dodd says always have plenty of

beef, so you might send a few steaks. . . . What? Porter-house or sirloin? I—er —I don't think we care for any of those fancy ones—just some plain steaks will do.

Now please send the things very early this morning, because we dine at seven, and Mr. Dodd doesn't like to wait. . . . Yes, that's all, I think — that's all — Why, the idea—it's Friday, and our girl doesn't eat a bit of meat on Friday—you will have to take all of those things back. Just send around a few nice fishes, and be sure and send their giblets! Good-morning.



Hunting for an Apartment

Hunting for an Apartment

THERE, Dicky, I'm all ready but my veil, and I'm going to let you tie it on for me. Well, you needn't look so frightened, it won't hurt you. It's quite time you learned how, for in just one month and six days— O-o-o-h, Dicky! You'll rub all the powder off—now don't be foolish any more. I wonder when you'll get real sensible? I'll just hate you when you do—so! Now tie my veil; we haven't any time to lose. . . . No, not another one.

Now, just take the ends—no, don't pull it. Wait—wait till I get it in the middle.

Goodness! It's all come off. There, now—try again. Roll the ends—oh no, not as though you were twisting a rope. Now tie it—easy—not so loose; it feels floppy. Tighter! U-u-h-h-h! Untie it quick—I didn't know you were so stupid. . . . Well, I have— Well, just once more. . . . I'll tie it myself. Now I'm ready. . . .

Take Jerry? Oh no; see, he's asleep. . . . Leave him alone. . . . He's so big. . . . Well, I just want you to know, Mr. Dick, I'm not going to be bossed and made to do things I don't want to, and the sooner you understand it the better, and I'm *not* going to take Jerry, and— . . . [*Whistles.*] Oh, come on, Jerry — come on, old doggy!

Have you got the paper with those advertisements I marked? . . . Then you've lost it. . . . Yes—yes—I did. . . .

Dicky, I certainly gave it to you. . . . I don't know where you put it. . . . No, I did. . . . No, I didn't. . . . You did. . . . I'll look just to oblige you, but of course I know— Well, did you ever! Here it is on the table. I wonder how it got there —just where I left it—but I remember perfectly well giving it— Never mind, we've got it—that's the important thing.

I have about engaged that girl I spoke of. . . . No, I didn't ask her for her reference. . . . No, I didn't exactly forget it, but I think it's insulting, anyway. However, she's perfectly honest. . . . Well, if you must know, I asked her and she said she was. . . . Very well, but if she doesn't know, who does? Now, answer me that, Mr. Lawyer. . . . Yes, she's colored. Those colored girls don't seem to eat anything, and the Irish ones have awful appetites,

so I would rather trust to one stealing something occasionally than to have a girl eating a lot all the time. You'd find, in the end, the colored one was the cheaper.

Oh, is this the first on the list? This is lovely. I know I shall like to live here—those cunning little carved heads over the windows. And such nice people in the house, too. . . . What do I mean? Look at those curtains on the second floor—real lace. I guess I know what kind of people live behind those curtains. Now, I'm going to do all the talking, and don't you say one word. . . . I generally do? That is polite. We are going to pretend we're married—it won't be half as embarrassing. And if you say any more rude things like that, I won't even have to intimate it. . . . Never mind, never mind. . . . You

can't very well kiss me here in the street. . . . Let's go in. . . . No, it's not a hint, stupid. [*They enter.*

I like those palms. . . . Why, no, they're not— They are— Well, I'll feel. No, they're not real. Still, if we like the rooms, I wouldn't let that make us decide against the place.

We are looking for an apartment, my hus—hus—why, my—just my husband and I. What have you? . . . Only one vacant? . . . Yes, of course we only want one, but I always like to see two or more, because if you haven't several to choose from, how do you know which one you want? . . . Ground floor? . . . Have you an elevator? . . . I'm glad of that—I must have an elevator. . . . What difference does it make, if we're on the first floor, Dicky? I don't care if we don't use it

—I like an elevator—I just like to know it's there if I did want to use it—so! . . . Yes, we will look at — Jerry is always under my feet, Dicky, he's so big—I said not to bring him.

Oh, my! what a very thin hall! It would make a lovely bowling-alley. . . . Yes, I suppose so—the hall doesn't really matter much. As you say, you only use it to get somewhere else. . . . Yes—yes. . . . What lovely big closets! . . . What? —they're bedrooms? My goodness! I— why— . . . Yes, that's true, you really only need a bedroom to sleep in, and of course you don't need light when you are asleep, and it's dark everywhere at night, anyway.

This is the dining-room? . . . I thought so, because it's too small to put a table in. . . . Oh, they make them all that way?

. . . It is pretty dark. . . . Yes, that is true—yes, I suppose so— He says, Dicky, no one uses the dining-room except to eat in, and you always can find your mouth even if you can't see.

I know this is the parlor—by that mirror over the mantel-shelf. But isn't it rather peculiar having the parlor windows looking out in the back? . . . Oh, the architect wanted to have this house different from other apartments? I see. I like things a little odd myself. But, dear me, do those people over there always have their clothes on the line? I shouldn't like that. . . . You would speak to them about it? . . . Oh, that would be all right, then. Thank you. Who lives on the next floor? Is that so? . . . How lovely to live in the same house with a real playwright! I've

never seen one, but I've heard they are so quiet and refined. I said to D—to—to —to my hus—husband— It's so absurd, but I can't quite get used to saying "my husband," though we have been married a great many years. Well, I said as we came in I knew the right sort of people lived—why, don't, Dicky—behind those curtains. They are right over our heads, aren't they? . . . They entertain every Sunday afternoon? . . . How delightfully bohemian— Good heavens! what's that? Oh, my, I heard something smash. Why, they'll come through the ceiling. . . . What?—they're just having one of their entertainments? . . . They are singing—listen!—"There will be a hot old time." I don't think that sounds very literary. . . . Yes, I've heard geniuses are always eccentric. . . . You say it's only on Sun-

day? That isn't so bad. . . . Yes, it is cheerful.

Well, now, where is Jerry going to sleep? . . . How old is he? Why, how old is he, Dicky? . . . No, I don't know exactly either—about a year, I should think. . . . Don't allow children? . . . Oh, oh—you don't understand. We're only — we aren't—we haven't— Jerry's the dog! . . . What's the rent of this apartment? . . . Strange you should have to go to find out.

Well, you might have said something, Dicky. I never was so embarrassed in my life. . . . I know I said I wanted to do all the talking, but it came to such a dreadful— Hush! here's the man.

Well? . . . The apartment is already rented! Then why did you show it?— Dicky, he's looking very strangely at us

—do you think it was about Jerry? It's as well, for my hus—husband and I have just decided we would not care to take the place anyway. I don't like the way the wall-papers are arranged. If you could take this one and put it in the parlor, and put the parlor in the dining-room, and— Oh, of course, I know you couldn't do it—that's why I said it. *Good*-afternoon.

. . . We wouldn't have been any better off if I had let you talk, Dicky. Now, you trust to me—I know how to manage. I am sorry about that place, though —the lovely entrance and the palms, those cunning stone heads over the windows, and the elevator— . . . Well, never mind; suppose I *did* want to ride up in that elevator, wouldn't I be glad it was there? . . . I can't help it; whenever I see

a place without an elevator it makes me feel—well, funny, sort of.

This is the next place? . . . Red brick—I hate red brick, and that gray-stone house next to it makes it look cheap. Goodness, what a stuffy little entrance! and a mat with "Welcome" on it. I don't think this is very pleasant, waiting so long to get in. If we had to do this every time— We will look at the apartment you advertised to rent. We have really almost decided on another place—they were very anxious to have us. My hus—husband and I are quite satisfied where we are, in fact, but— What floor is your apartment on? . . . The sixth floor? Then of course you haven't an elevator? . . . I might have known it—isn't that just the way? Now, at that other place the nicest elevator, with one

of those long seats, with a lovely red-plush cushion all fastened down with little red buttons, on the first floor, and here no elevator and the flat on the roof! Of course we sha'n't take it, but I suppose we may as well look at it. It gets me so out of breath, Dicky, climbing stairs. . . . Excuse me, my belt is not tight—it isn't the fashion any more.

Would there be any one over our heads to entertain? . . . I forgot—the top floor. Well, then, we could annoy the people below us. How little the rooms are! . . . Yes, they are light. . . . That's true—it doesn't take so much carpet and things to furnish these small rooms, and it makes a difference when one is buying everything at once— Of course, I mean —we have been married a number of years, and we are sort of looking for a flat

for a kind of friend of mine who is thinking of being married, and—and—well, we thought we might furnish it for her.

The rooms certainly *are* very small. . . . Folding things? . . . Oh yes, I suppose so. . . . Have they, really? A folding dining-table, and it makes a wardrobe when it shuts up? But how annoying it would be if you were giving a dinner and it should start in to be a wardrobe and throw your gowns all over your guests! —and, on the other hand, suppose while it was a wardrobe it should start in to be a dining-table and spill soup all over your clothes! I know all about those folding things—they get so in the habit of folding they can't stop it. A friend of mine lived in the country—though I never could imagine why on earth she did: they had plenty of money and there

was no earthly reason— Well, anyway, she got one of those ironing-board step-ladder arrangements. When they got up on the ladder to put up a picture or curtain— Dicky, do you remember those pretty curtains? . . . Why, yes, you do— those white ones with the dot and ruffles. . . . I can't understand your forgetting about those curtains — they were so pretty. I believe I'll write Margaret and ask her where— Oh yes! Well, they would just get up to fix the curtains, when it would start to be an ironing-board and drop them right down. And sometimes when the girl was ironing it would begin to be a ladder, and the flat-irons would fly all over the place. And then they got afraid of it and put it up in the attic, and every stormy night it would have a sort of spasm and begin turning

itself into a step-board and ironing-ladder — I mean — Well, it really has nothing to do with this apartment, anyway.

Where are we going to put Jerry— Jerry's the dog; we can't fold him. . . . Yes, he is big, but he can't help it. . . . The people down-stairs keep their dog under the refrigerator? Oh no, we never could do that with Jerry—he wouldn't stand it a minute.

We think so much of Jerry; he came to us in such an odd way. My hus—husband—I mean Mr. Phelps—was detained down-town very late one night—it was business—and he did not leave his office till about two o'clock at night— Why, Dicky, why shouldn't I tell? Just as he got to the elevated station he met some friends, and they insisted on giving him

Jerry. It did seem so strange to give any one such a large dog at that time of night—or morning, rather. Well, Jerry being so big, he couldn't be taken on the elevated, so Mr. Phelps tried to drag him back of a surface-car, but Jerry *wouldn't* drag, and his poor feet began to get all worn off. Then Mr. Phelps stood on the front platform and tried to drive Jerry—but it was no use, he *wouldn't* drive. So Mr. Phelps had to walk all the way up to 145th Street with Jerry; and when he got up to his apartment, and his mother—Mr. Phelps's mother—heard Jerry bark and saw how big he was, she wouldn't let him come in. And Mr. Phelps had to walk up and down the street with him for the rest of the night, and in the morning took him to a livery-stable—it was a livery-stable, wasn't it, Dicky—or was

it the butcher? So you can see why we think so much of Jerry!

Now, I like this apartment for many reasons. Of course it is high up, and the rooms are small, and there is no steam, and no elevator, but, as you have explained, all these things have their advantages. What is the rent? . . . Is that all? My! I wouldn't live in a place that didn't charge more than that. . . . Yes, I know, but the price — goodness! it's dreadful. . . . You think they could make it a little more? . . . No; even so, we couldn't decide at once—I would want a day or so to think it over. . . . I sha'n't see Mr. Phelps to-night, or to-morrow night either. I—I—we—we— I don't see him every night— I may as well own up, we are just pretending to be married. Will you inquire if they could

raise the rent? Thanks. Cheap, Dicky —that's just it. Don't use the word. I hate it. . . . Of course, dear, I know we're going to be poor. I like it—I'm glad of it—but if we do have to live in such a horrid little—I mean cosey little place, I should feel better if we paid a little more rent. . . . I'm not surprised that you don't understand—men never do. . . . Hush! here he comes—you wait for me on the floor below—I'll bargain with him and make him come up in his price. Run along—there's a dear.

. . . What did you say? The apartment is already rented? Then what do you mean by showing it to us? . . . None but married—respect—I don't know what you mean, but you are a perfectly dreadful man—Jerry, quick, come!

Oh, here you are, Dicky. I decided it

wouldn't do at all—I would rather die than live in this house now. . . . No, I've just changed my mind, that's all. Let's hurry out of here.

So this is number three. . . . I don't like that doctor's sign on the first floor. It makes me feel as though the place wasn't healthy. Then, again, it would be handy in case Jerry was sick. I just hate these feet-scraping arrangements at the door—they are so old-fashioned. I suppose we may as well go in, but I know I sha'n't like it. Goodness! palms again — I'm tired to death of them.

Have you an apartment to rent? . . . You have? . . . Are you perfectly sure it is not already rented? . . . We will look at it. . . . Yes, it is a nice entrance, but you can't live in an entrance. . . . You have an elevator? . . . I'm beginning to think they

are not sanitary—they collect dirt. What floor is the apartment? . . . The second? Then it really is no advantage having an elevator, anyway—only one flight. . . . Do you object to Jerry? Jerry's the dog. . . . You have a playground for dogs and a man to shampoo them? . . . Why, yes, I suppose it is nice, but it's a peculiar arrangement. What a wide hall! . . . All the rooms light and good size? That does seem strange. . . . What about the people overhead; do they entertain? . . . Wha — what — just an old man with paralysis? I never heard of an old man having paralysis alone in an apartment. . . . Why, no, I suppose there is no reason why he shouldn't, but— Is he very quiet about it?—does he pound on the floor, or sing, "There will be a hot old time"? . . . Electric lights, and you don't have

to pay for them? Well, Dicky, I don't see but we will have to take this place—I can't find any objection to it. What is the rent? . . . I should think that was reasonable.

I may as well explain at once — we had so much trouble at the other places —that we are not even pretending we are married. But we are going— . . . You are not sure about the rent? Well, go and see, please.

It does seem too good to be true, for I'm so tired out I can't look at another place. . . . Well, I can't help it. I'm just worn out and— Here he comes. . . .

Well? . . . What! The apartment is rented? I thought it was when I came in! I shouldn't take it anyway, under any circumstances. I don't like the idea

about the dog's playground. *Good*-afternoon.

. . . I don't care; it wasn't my fault; and it wouldn't have been any different if you had done the talking. I'm all tired out—and I didn't know it was such an awful trouble and fuss to get married—and I just hate you—so!—and I'm just going home to my mother and stay there. So! Come, Jerry!

The Heart of a Woman

The Heart of a Woman

IT ain't much of a story, 'bout Jim an' me, but if you want to hear it I'd just as soon tell you, sir. I think I'd like to, for it's been buried in my heart, away from all human bein's, for so long.

Sometimes, when I can't seem to bear it no longer, I go down to the sea at the bottom of these cliffs, an' I whisper it all out to the waves, an' they seem to listen an' understand, an' sort o' comfort me.

Lonesome here, sir? Oh no! I'm used to it, one thing, I s'pose. I've

lived here so long alone everythin' seems to talk to me.

An' on some o' these gran' moonlight nights I go out—way out on the farthest-juttin' cliff—an' sit there an' just look an' look out over that water, till somethin' inside o' me seems to give 'way an' I can't help a-cryin'. An' just small an' faint like I can hear the fiddles 'way down in the village where they are dancin'.

But I'd rather stay up here alone, where every blade o' grass an' every leaf 'pears to know me. 'Tain't always talkin' that makes you most understood. Yes, sir, I've lived up here ten years all alone; ever sence—well, sir, I'll begin at the beginnin'—'tain't very long.

I was born down in that village, sir. If you step this way, I can show you

the very house. There; do you see that little tumble-down cabin in the lane off the street? Yes; that was where I was born, sir. No; there ain't nobody lived there in many a year—not sence my folks died, an' that was 'way long ago. I tried to live there after—after—it all. But I couldn't stan' it.

Every night I could see father an' mother a-settin' either side o' that fireplace, a-lookin' at me so reproachful like. I couldn't stan' it, so I come up here.

Well, Jim an' his folks lived back o' the village, up on that hill. No, sir, you can't see the Hall from here now; the trees hide it in summer. They come down from London; Jim was a weakly little feller then, an' the doctor said he needed the sea air.

I'll never forget the first time I saw Jim, though I wasn't nothin' but a little mite of a thing.

One summer day I was sent on an errand to a house just beyond where Jim lived, an' as I passed the big gate openin' into the driveway I heard some music. It was beautiful music, so different from the acorjeons an' jews-harps that was all I'd ever listened to. I was one o' those scary kids, but I got so kind o' bewitched by that music that I went up to the gate an' pushed away the vines coverin' it, an' looked in.

It was a party goin' on—Jim's ten-year-old birthday party, as it turned out to be—an' they was a-havin' it out on the lawn. I got so interested watchin' that I pushed the vines farther away, forgettin' they might see me.

Just as they was sittin' down to a great big table underneath a tree, Jim he saw me. He said somethin' to a lady standin' by him, but she shook her head an' tried to make him sit down. But Jim stamped his foot an' said he would, an' then they all laughed, an' he come runnin' down to the gate to me.

I don't know how it come about, for I was always so frightened o' strangers, but just as soon as Jim took my hand an' drew me in, I wasn't a mite afraid o' any o' those big folks.

What a fine time I had! I forgot all about the errand, an' didn't get home till dark, an' then got a whippin' for stayin' out so late. But I didn't care. It was worth it.

Well, Jim an' me sort o' grew up together after that. He got strong an'

hearty with our racin' an' tearin' over the cliffs, I think.

As we got older, I found that I was the stronger nater of us two, an' yet it was always Jim that went first, an' I followed like a dog.

One afternoon, when the tide was runnin' out to sea, I was down on the rocks, a-gatherin' mussels in the pools left by the ebb. I'd most filled my basket, an' was watchin' a fleet o' fishin'-boats as they rocked up an' down in the swell o' the waves. Pretty soon I heard Jim a-hallooin' to me, as he came jumpin' over them puddle-holes.

He was plum out o' breath when he got to me, but his face was a-shinin' with gladness. He said he was a-goin' away to London to get prepared for college, an' wasn't it the grandest thing?

When he told me my heart seemed to stan' still for a minute; an' then I felt as though I was freezin' up all over. I didn't say nothin', but turned away, lookin' out to sea again, but the boats was all a blur, an' I couldn't see nothin' distinct.

Jim, he expected me to say somethin', I guess, for he waited a minute, an' then said if that was all I minded about his good luck, very well, an' he didn't care if he never saw me again—he always thought I was a selfish girl, an' now he knew it.

I couldn't have moved or spoke if I was to have died for it.

An' then I heard his steps as he jumped from rock to rock, back to the beach.

I never could bear the sight o' that fleet o' fishin'-boats sence.

Some one told me that he went away

next day, an' I didn't see him for three years.

You'll not mind my sayin' so, sir, but in that time I had grown to be, as every one 'round here said, the prettiest girl in the village. I had beaux enough, but somehow I couldn't care for any o' them—I'd rather be by myself an' think o' Jim than have the whole pack runnin' after me.

Well, one winter's night, when I was comin' home from the rectory, an' had just reached the foot o' that cliff, I heard some one call my name, "Aileen, Aileen!" I didn't know the voice at first, an' then it come again, louder.

I turned—an' oh, it was Jim. I don't know how it happened, sir, but first thing I knew I was laughin' an' cryin' in Jim's arms.

After a while he held me off, a-lookin' at me from head to foot. An' then he said he'd never any idea I would o' grown up to be such a beauty, an' there wasn't one o' the fine ladies up to London that could hold a candle to me.

Oh, how happy that made me!—an' when he kissed me good-night, he told me he loved me!

He stayed with his folks for a week, that time, an' I saw him every day. When he was a-tellin' me good-bye he said he was goin' to write me an' I must answer him. I could write a little, in a way.

He was a-searchin' in his pocket for somethin' to put the address on, an' pulled out some letters. From among 'em slipped a picter, an' it fell to the ground, face upward. I had it in a second.

It was a girl; so good an' pretty lookin'. How I hated her for that!

After I'd looked at it for a while, I asked Jim, very quiet like, who she was. He had turned white as the snow clingin' to the branches overhead, an' his voice was unsteady, as he told me it was just a young lady friend of his up to London. I said he didn't need no friend but me—an' then I tore the whole picter into bits an' threw 'em on the ground an' crushed 'em with my foot.

At that Jim turned on me like a wild thing, an' gripped me on the arm until I could a-screamed with the hurt. At first I thought he was goin' to push me off the cliff, an' I didn't much care. But he didn't; he just hissed at me, "You devil!" an' then walked off an' left me.

I waited 'til 'most dark, hopin' he'd come back, but he didn't.

A few days after that I got a letter from him pos'marked "London"—an' he said he was sorry he had offended me, an' would I forgive him, an' he didn't care for no one but me. But there wasn't nothin' to forgive, I wrote him, for it was all that ugly temper of mine.

He said he was comin' again in the spring, an' for me to be true to him, for then he had somethin' to ask me.

I was just a-singin' in my heart all that winter an' into the spring, a-waitin' an' a-waitin' for him to come back to me. Early in May I got another letter from him, sayin' he was comin' home an' to meet him on the twentieth, at five in the afternoon, at our old-time meetin'-place on the cliff.

Well, on the nineteenth, I was walkin' up from the village, when I saw Jim an' that picter girl a-drivin' from the station in the Hall dog-cart. I got down back of a hedge till they passed, so they didn't see me. They was talkin' away, an' they both laughed an' laughed, an' I knew it was about me.

I was so crazy with madness an' grief I wanted to kill 'em both, an' if I'd had the chance I would.

I lay awake all that night, a-thinkin' it over an' tryin' to make up my mind whether I'd go an' meet him next day or not. At last I decided I'd go, if only to hear what he had to say about that girl—an' I did want to see him so!

Well, Jim was there first an' came towards me with his arms out, a-callin' me. I never heard any one say "Aileen"

so it sounded so like music, as Jim. An' when he came to me that way, a-speakin' my name, it just seemed as though I'd rather drop dead than not to go to him.

But there was somethin' here in my heart that wouldn't let me till I'd heard what he had to say about that girl. I told him I'd seen him an' her, an' asked him what it all meant.

He wanted to know if that was all a-troublin' me, an' laughed. He passed it over so easy like, sayin' she was down on a little visit to his mother — her mother an' his bein' such great friends. It sounded so right that I made up my mind it was true—or he had learned to lie mighty well.

But o' course I believed him, an' I think to this day he was tellin' me the

truth. For then he asked me would I be his wife—Jim's wife!

The rest o' the time he was home it seemed as though I was walkin' on air, I was so happy. To think o' bein' Jim's wife.

He stayed a month this time, an' the girl stayed, too—but I didn't care about her any more. I knew Jim loved me.

We was to keep our secret, he said, till he come back at Christmas, an' then it wasn't to be good-bye any more.

The weeks an' months didn't seem so very long after Jim went, for I was lookin' forward so to Christmas. Jim didn't write very often. He was so busy, he said; but the same letters did just as well, for I read them all over an' over every day.

I'd hardly ever been up to Jim's folks,

sence I was a little girl. They was nice to me, but in a kind of a way that I couldn't tell you, sir; but it made me mad clear through. A couple o' weeks before Christmas it began to be talked around the village that there was to be a big ball affair on Christmas night at the Hall. They had never given big parties before, an' every one was wonderin' what it was about.

Well, I hadn't heard from Jim in ever so long, but he had told me he'd be home Christmas, so I just waited for that. All Christmas week passed, an' I didn't see him nor hear nothin' about him, an' I was too proud to ask.

I woke up on Christmas mornin' with a queer feelin'. I don't believe much in presenterments, but on that day I knew, somehow, somethin' was goin' to

happen. I stayed in all day, for I was in no mood for all the happiness an' laughin' goin' on outside.

It snowed 'till 'most dark, an' at night I pretended to go to bed early. But when all was still an' the lights down, I dressed myself an' slipped out.

Just as I was leavin' the house, somethin' said to me, "Go back to your room." I crept up there again, an' as I pushed open the door the moon shined right in at the window onto a dagger that lay a-gleamin' on the table. This knife was sent to me that day, for a Christmas gift, by one of my old beaux, who'd just come back from India.

I knew right off that knife was what I came for, so I put it in the bosom of my dress an' crept out again.

So long as I live I'll never forget

what a gran' night that was. The snow had stopped after sundown, an' now everythin' was a-glistenin' an' a-sparklin' in the moonlight. It was so still that down on the beach you could hear the hush-hush of the waves as they ran up on the pebbles.

It was all dark in the village, but 'way up on the hill-side the Hall was ablaze from every window. An' I could hear the music, such lovely music—like I heard the first time I met Jim. I thought o' that time, so long ago, an' I couldn't help a-cryin' some.

I wasn't just clear where I wanted to go, or what I wanted to do, but the cold chill o' that bit o' steel lyin' in my breast seemed to urge me to "go on." I kept a-walkin', an' 'fore long I found myself slippin' through the side gateway to the

Hall. No one saw me, an' it was all quiet outside.

I felt for the knife. It was safe. I stumbled through the snowdrifts up to my waist, but somehow I didn't seem to feel it nor mind it. I fell twice, but I held on to the dagger, so I didn't care.

The drawin'-room windows was nearly on a level with the ground, an' as the curtains weren't pulled close, I could look in.

There — there was Jim dancin' with that picter girl!

I grew blind an' dizzy with rage. I wouldn't be fooled this time. I watched 'em till I saw 'em go off together into the conservatory. There was a glass door leadin' into it from the grounds, an' I crawled 'round an' looked in. They was all alone an' seemed to be talkin' very earnest.

Then — then Jim he leaned over an' kissed her!

I couldn't stan' that. I drew out the dagger an' jerked open the door. The music crashed out then, so they didn't hear me.

I rushed up to the girl an' was just a-goin' to strike her, when Jim turned an' saw me. Quick as lightnin' he put himself before her, an' the blow fell on his arm. The girl screamed an' clung onto Jim, sobbin'. The knife had fell to the floor, an' before I could grab it Jim had kicked it away into a fountain.

By this time people was rushin' in from every direction.

An' do you know what was in my mind then, above everythin' else? It was how poor an' mean I looked beside

her in that floaty, cloudy white dress, a-showin' her pretty neck an' arms.

How I hated her!

But right then an' there all the anger in my heart against Jim died out. I didn't blame him — 'twasn't his fault. She was prettier than I would have been — even in those same clothes. There was a somethin' about her more than the things she had on.

Well, they was all a-speakin' out an' askin' questions. The girl she sprang up then an' pointed to me an' started to say somethin', but I said: "Stop! I'm the one to speak now. Jim here has promised to marry me, an' I want to know if he's a-goin' to keep his word or not! Did you promise me, Jim, or didn't you? Answer!"

Jim stood back among some o' them

palm things with his wounded arm behind him, an' so no one but me saw the blood slowly tricklin' to the floor. He lifted up his head an' he was pale as death. Yes, he said, he had promised, an' he would stand by his word.

At this they all shuddered an' whispered an' shrugged their shoulders, an' the women looked at me through eyeglasses with long handles. I heard one man near me laugh and say I was damned handsome, anyhow, an' he didn't think he blamed Jim after all—though he was a fool to let things go so far as to promise to marry me. The brute!

The girl had fell into a chair by Jim an' was cryin' an' sobbin', an' Jim was pettin' her on the shoulder with his well hand an' tryin' to comfort her. Perhaps it was the sight o' that, I don't

know, but it came sudden like to me that he never had an' never would love me in the way he loved her.

I don't know, neither, what made me do it, but I turned again to all that sneerin' lot o' men an' women, an' said: "I didn't come here to make no trouble. I come to tell Jim that—that—I don't—love him—no more, an' if he wants to have that girl over there he can have her for all o' me."

An' Jim looked up at me with such a joy in his face as I never saw on any human bein' before.

That was the worst hurt I ever had.

Then the girl come runnin' up to me —I believe she was goin' to put her arms 'round me, but I pushed her off an' run out into the night.

I don't know how I ever got home,

for it was snowin' so hard again I couldn't see a foot in front of me.

Of course, the story got all over the village, an' I think the disgrace of it killed my father an' mother. Jim, he married the girl a while after, an' now they live up to London in gran' style.

Strange that I should have stayed here? Oh no, sir. It is right over there on that farthest-juttin' cliff that Jim an' me used to meet each other. No other place would seem like home but this. Such a sacrifice? No, sir; I only loved Jim more than I did myself, that's all. He was too good for a girl like me.

A Bill from the Milliner

A Bill from the Milliner

She enters cautiously.

KATIE — Katie; has she gone? What did she say? Tell me every word. . . . Oh, oh, oh! Katie, you oughtn't to have told me that— . . . Well, I know I told you to tell me, but— Never mind; it's all right. What else did she say? . . . Oh, the wretch! That she would send and take the hat back if she wasn't paid by to-morrow morning? So vulgar of her—bringing the bill herself. I never heard of such a thing. . . . And she said I was no lady?

She's a beast! To think I've been buying my hats all this time from such a low woman.

Katie—you're sure Mr. Carson didn't hear a word? . . . Oh, Katie, what do you think she can do to me? Do you think she could put me in prison, just for a few hats? . . . No, Katie, you're a good girl, but you can't help me. Only, don't you ever let that dreadful woman in again. That's all, Katie.

I—I—almost thought I'd paid that other bill. I — I — I'm pretty sure I thought I had when I bought this other hat. Well, why shouldn't she let me have it—she's got a whole store full of hats! If I had the money I'd give it to her. Now, she has the hats — why shouldn't she let me have one?

The world is full of horrid people who

are always wanting money, money, money. Perhaps I'd better just look over those perfectly awful accounts again and see if I can make them come out different. Different! That's just the trouble. I get a different answer every single time I go over them. And this last time I found I had $87 left by the accounts, but I hadn't a cent in my pocketbook. And last week the accounts said I oughtn't to have had any money left—and I did. I had $10! Oh, I wonder where it is. Oh, I guess I've spent it. I wish I hadn't paid the grocer. He's such a nice man I'm sure he wouldn't have minded waiting if I'd told him about the hats. [*Picks up pencil and paper.*] Now—there's $100. One, three naughts and then a period and two more naughts for where there isn't any cents. Oh,

I've made a joke. "Took out $10," making $110. M-m-m-m-m—oh, I ought to have extracted it, and I've added it on. Oh, bother! Well, $110 — take away from that $10, makes it $100. Now: "Grocer, $14.83"—one-four-period-eight-three. "Manicure, 50 cents"—five-o-period. "Hair-dresser, 75 cents"—"Incidentals, $83.92." Well, I got rid of that hundred easily.

Now, for the other hundred. "S. S. V., $6.87." What on earth could that be? "S. S. V.?" Oh, flowers for Julia Marsh's funeral. But what a funny price for flowers — six dollars and eighty-seven cents. Oh no—it wasn't that. It was dripping-pans for the refrigerator! I remember now. I saw the sale advertised, and they were so cheap I bought four—and then they wouldn't deliver them be-

cause they were such a bargain, and I had to get a cab to take them home. So, altogether, they cost me six dollars and eighty-seven cents. That's just it —every time I try to economize it's so expensive!

"X. Y. Z., $8.50." Well, I haven't the remotest idea. I always think at the time if I put down some strange initials I will know what it was so much better than if I put down the right ones. Oh ye— No. Oh ye— No. Oh ye— No. Oh *yes;* it was that little flannel shirt-waist!

"T., 49c." That was the unlaundered dress-shirt I got Tom, and then he didn't like it—said it wasn't good enough. I don't care, I think forty-nine cents is quite enough for any old calico shirt. Men spend too much on their clothes.

anyhow. And I notice they are anxious enough to have you economize, but they never like you to begin on them.

"T., 75c." Well, I won't forget about that in a hurry. That was for six lovely little white satin bow ties, all made up, with a little elastic and thing to fasten them with in the back. Tom always has such a dreadful time tying his dress ties, and I thought he'd be so pleased, but he wasn't, a bit! And I found out he gave them to Katie to give to her cousin—at least, she says he's her cousin!

"Liver-shaped writing-table, $83." Oh no; kidney-shaped table. There!—Why, I've got nine-fifty down here four times! Funny I should have bought four things for nine-fifty. I wonder what it's for. Oh yes; it was that little spangled fan. And then when I spent money and

couldn't remember what for, why, I just put "nine-fifty" down again. Of course. I wonder if I have all those little periods in the right place. Well, I guess it doesn't matter. Now I must add it up.

Oh, dear, what a lot of sevens. I never could add sevens. Six and seven—six and seven— If it was six and six it would be twelve, and one more makes it thirteen. Thirteen and five, nineteen; and seven [*counts on fingers*], twenty-six; twenty-six and eight, forty-three— [*Adds silently.*] Well, there's the top; I guess it's seventy-nine. Oh, dear, last time I made it ninety-seven, and now it's only seventy-nine. [*Adds silently.*] Now; four-eight-eight-five-seven-nine. Sounds like a telephone call! It doesn't look right. I don't know where the little period ought to go. Oh, I guess about two or three from the

end. Good Heavens! Four thousand, eight hundred and eighty-five dollars and seventy-nine cents! Oh no, *no;* something *must* be the matter. Well, I'm not going to bother any more. What's the use? Here's this perfectly awful bill from the milliner, and I've spent all my allowance and all the house money—and I'll have to tell Tom, and what will he say! Well, here goes—I'll do my best.

Tom — T-o-o-o-m, dear; aren't you ever coming? Why, Tom, I've been waiting and waiting and wondering why on earth you didn't come in here. I thought maybe you didn't love me any more. . . . There, now, you sit right here in this lovely comfy chair. There, are you quite comfortable? . . . Sure? . . . Wouldn't you

like a cushion for your head? . . . No? . . . Well, I know you want a footstool—isn't that better? . . . I thought so. Maybe you'd rather stretch yourself out on the divan? . . . A-l-l r-i-g-h-t—it doesn't make any difference to me, as long as you are comfortable. You poor darling; how tired you must get, working so hard down in that nasty old office all day, to buy pretty things for your extravagant little wife—but you don't think I'm really extravagant, do you, dear? At least, not often? . . . You old darling—You're positive you're comfortable? . . . Wouldn't you like to smoke your pipe? . . . Yes, I know I've never let you smoke in here before, but I'm going to to-night—you—you—look so tired. . . . Now, don't you move; I'm going to get it for you. Don't you get up; I'll get the match— Now

stop—I'm going to light the match. [*Hops about, endeavoring to strike match on slipper.*] No, I want to light it—you leave me alone and I'll strike it all right. Oh, I didn't mean to be cross—I didn't mean to be cross. . . . Why, Tom, I'm just as nice every night, you precious old silly— The idea!

Goodness, what makes pipes smell so!— Oh, I don't mind it—I don't mind it at all. You know, I believe in time I shall get to like it. I think I'm liking it now. Now, what does it smell like? . . . Tobacco. You stup— Ha, ha! That's awfully funny. Smells like tobacco— . . . Yes, I do, too. I think it's awfully funny. If you don't mind, I'm going to sit right here by you on this little stool. Like to play cards? . . . Not now? . . . Later? . . . All right. Do you want me to

recite for you? . . . "Not as bad as that" —well, that is polite. . . .

Do you know, I just love those darling little curls on your forehead? I wish you wouldn't spank them down so. I like them to poke up and be all fluffy. [*Pause.*] I suppose any one else would think I'm idiotic, but I think you're frightfully good-looking. . . . Yes, I do—so there. [*Pause.*] You've got an awfully nice hand, for a man. Do you want me to tell your palm? . . . My, but you have splendid lines, and generous—I never saw anything like it. Now, hold your hand up. Well, the money just runs through your fingers. . . . I help you? I wish you wouldn't make that kind of joke to-night. . . . Oh, no reason. I—I think I'll go to my desk for a few minutes. . . . Why, I'm not restless—I'm not restless a bit. . . .

Well, all right; I'll sit down again. . . . Oh, nothing; I just wanted to look over a few things—and answer some notes. You see, I asked Alice Tyler to go to the matinée with me, and I've lost her address. Now I've got to write her and ask her for it. . . . The idea, how could I? Well, anyway, you know I must write our acceptance for the Sheldon's dinner. . . . You don't want to go? I don't care, I do think you're just too mean for anything. You know I'm dying to go and— Oh no, no, no; I didn't mean anything. No, I didn't. I—I—I—was only pretending to be annoyed. I don't mind one *single* bit. I'd much rather stay home alone with you— Yes, I would.

Do you know, I read in the paper this morning that Margaret Holmes's mother died in Paris, and I was going to write her,

too. But then, I don't know—she died so far off—it seems kind of different. So I don't think I will. . . .

What did I do to-day? Well, I went to market this morning—and, do you know, Katie just exasperates me. I tell her to make a list of everything she needs right after breakfast, and not forget a thing, and just as I'm going down the front steps she is sure to shriek after me, "Don't forget to get the brass polish off the grocer," or some such dreadful thing. . . . I have told her not to, but it doesn't do a bit of good. Besides, I'm afraid to say anything for fear she'll leave!

Then I went down-town—and whom do you think I saw in the car? Don't you remember that woman with the black hair at the hotel last summer? . . . Why, don't you know—you never could remem-

ber her name—who is she? . . . Well, never mind. But I wish you could have seen her hat! [*Shivers.*] . . . Oh, I don't know. I felt so queer when I said "hat." All my life I've been that way. I never could bear to hear the word "hat." Well, then I went to the dressmaker's— . . . Oh, nothing much—just a little silk and panne velvet and lace, thrown together—a cheap little thing.

And then—and then—I accidentally dropped in at the milliner's—for no particular reason. And whom do you think I met there? Emily Brown. She was so mad because I saw her there. Do you know what she does? She tries on all the hats and never buys a thing—and then goes home and copies them. You know, Frank is too stingy with her for anything. She never has a decent

thing. Just fancy my going out with you in a home-made hat! Imagine such a thing! Well, poor Emily can't help it, with such a hateful husband. How she must envy me.

As I was saying, there I found myself in the milliner's, and I turned to look at something—I don't know what—when that stupid milliner popped a hat on my head, and then nothing would do but I must look at it in the glass. [*Pause.*] You remember how you used to love me in that red gown I had before we were married? . . . I thought I'd get a red hat some time, just to please you. [*Pause.*] By-the-way, it was a red hat that milliner put on my head! . . . Why, no, she didn't put it on top of my other hat. . . . Why, yes—I must have had my hat off, some way. Well, it was awfully

becoming, and I knew you'd just adore me in that hat. So [*sepulchrally*] I—I—took it! It was very inexpensive. . . . How much? It was ten or twelve dollars or—twenty-six fifty.

And—and—the funniest thing—you'll die laughing when I tell you about it. I've spent all my allowance and all the house money, and haven't a thing to pay the milliner with. Here's the bill. . . .

It's all right!—You're not angry?—Well, if that isn't maddening! [*Aside.*] And here I've exhausted myself trying to be agreeable, all for nothing. . . . No, I don't want to play cards now. . . . You know I hate ping-pong. . . . No, I don't want to do anythng. I don't feel very well. I'm going into the library to finish my book—I can't stand the smell of that old pipe a minute longer!

A Woman in a Shoe-shop

A Woman in a Shoe-shop

She enters the shoe-shop.

SHOES. . . . High or low? Why, I haven't decided—this is very sudden. . . . Oh, you want to know to show me where to sit? . . . Here for ties and there for boots? . . . Isn't this a new idea? . . . No? I don't seem to remember at all. I suppose I've forgotten. . . . Well, I haven't made up my mind yet which I want. Let's see. . . . Of course it is really spring now—and yet it seems as though winter had scarcely gone—and I am always taking cold in my

ankles. . . . I think boo— Still, the weather does get so warm so quickly when it does start in. . . . No, I—no, I. . . . Well, I will look at your ties first, though I think in the end I shall take the boots.

Now you must get some one to wait on me right away—I am in the greatest hurry. . . . No, if you please, I don't intend to divide a salesman with any one! I want one to wait on me alone.

Yes, ties. . . . Two and a half A. . . . Well, I can't help what is marked in the shoes—that's what I wear. Probably they have made a mistake in marking the size—I presume they are careless.

Now, I'll tell you exactly what I want. . . . Now, I don't want anything too fancy to wear in the street—and for rainy days; and yet it must be suitable for evening dress—yes, and for golf—oh yes, and to

wear on the steamer. I think of going abroad this summer. . . . I could have gone last year just as well as not if I'd said the word. . . .

Well, I like that. [*To near-by salesman.*] Will you kindly bring back that man who was waiting on me? . . . Why did you go off that way in such a rush? I wanted to tell you to hurry—I am in the greatest haste.

[*To salesman waiting on woman neighbor.*] Would you mind lending me your pencil—and a piece of paper. . . . You haven't any paper? Then get some, please. . . . I am sure you won't mind, madam; it won't take him but a moment. . . . Get the paper. . . . You see, I just met a friend who told me how to make that fidget—no, that isn't it—that chocolate stuff—oh, fudge—and if I don't write it

down at once I'll forget. . . . Thank you. [*Writes.*]

Oh, take them away—I wouldn't wear those things if you gave them to me. . . . Flat heels and great big soles! Do I look like a woman with a big sole? . . . I should think not. Take them away. [*To neighbor.*] Do you know how long you boil the chocolate—or do you boil it at all? . . . You don't know? How annoying!

Patent leather? I didn't tell you to get patent leather. I don't believe I like it—it's so cold in hot weather and so hot in cold weather — well, whichever way you put it, it's disagreeable. Besides, I think it makes the feet look large—not that *I* have to worry about that. And the heels are too high. You know, you don't seem to understand what I want.

. . . Well, bring me something like this—this person next to me is trying on.

Is that it? I don't like that at all—Oh no, that's horrible—perfectly awful! They look so big—and there's no arch at all. You see, I have such a high instep. . . . All right, you can try it on, but I know by looking at it it's miles too large. . . . Oh no, it's not too small—wait till I step on it. . . . It's *not* too small—there. . . . Oh yes, perfectly comfortable, but take it off quick! . . . Well, I couldn't wear a larger size! Get something else. Besides, I don't care for that medium heel —I don't want anything exaggerated, but I must have one thing or the other! It is the strangest thing, you have all manner of pretty shoes in the window, and when you come inside you can't find anything fit to be seen. . . .

Floor-walker, that is such a stupid man waiting on me—he doesn't seem to have an idea what I want. Can't you get some one else to wait on me? . . . All right.

Two and a half A—and never mind what's marked in the shoe! . . . Yes, something in ties, and I don't care what you bring me as long as it is just what I want. [*To returning salesman.*] No, this ma—gentleman is waiting on me—you didn't seem to know what I wanted. . . .

What is that shoe over there in the case? . . . You haven't my size? Well, if that isn't too exasperating! That is the only decent shoe I've seen here, and there you have gone and not got my size. . . . I never knew it to fail.

No, I don't care for that—I don't like all that fancy business around there. . . . Very youthful-looking? Try it on. . . .

Very good fit—they look much better now they are on. . . . What size are they? . . . Four B? Take it right off! . . . I don't care whether they fit or not—I never wore a four B in all my life, and I'm not going to begin now! . . . No, you needn't bring any other size in that style—I am all out of the idea of it now.

. . . Floor-walker! Floor-walker! will you kindly have some one put on my shoe? I can't wait like this—my husband is home very ill, and I've got to rush right back. . . . Well, then, make him hurry.

[*Discovers woman friend.*] Ahem—a—hem! Man, will you please attract the attention of that lady over there in the boots? . . . No, not that one — the one in the badly fitting jacket—I want to speak to her.

How do you do? What on earth are you doing here? . . . Buying boots? I suppose so. Miserable shop, isn't it? And such stupid, disobliging salesmen. . . . I don't care if they do hear it—it may do them good. . . . Will? Oh, he's home sick. And cross! . . . You know how they are. Get the least little pain we wouldn't notice, and they think they are going to die right off! But this time Will is awfully sick—I told him it was about time he found out what real suffering was. If he had been through what I have. . . . To-day is his worst day, so I just started out first thing this morning, and I am not going back till dinner-time, and then only to get dressed to go to the theatre. . . . No, no—of course not —Will can't go. But it seemed such a shame to lose the tickets—so I am going

—with a sort of a brother-in-law of my sister—who lives up in the northern—part of Canada. . . . No, you have never seen *her*. . . . No, you have never seen *him*. . . . Tell me, how is your husband? . . . Indeed, I am so glad—

No, I don't care for that at all. Well, I can't tell you what I don't like about it—I just know it doesn't suit me. . . . Don't you keep the Ozone shoes? . . . Never heard of them? Why, that's very funny. I have a friend who lives out in Spokane—I think it is in Delaware—anyway, I know it is one of those Western States, and I should think if they kept them in a little bit of a place like that, you would have them in a great city like this! . . . Well, I suppose I'll have to take these things—they are perfectly horrid—

Say, isn't it great about Marion Gray

making such a hit on the stage? . . . Has she? Well, I should think so. She's famous. She's had a new kind of health food named after her! . . . Of course you know Margaret is engaged? . . . Yes, "at last," that's what I said, too. . . . I should think it was about time. Funny you didn't hear about it, though; she isn't making any secret of it; she could hardly contain herself till she told me. She's simply tickled to death. . . . Good-bye—I suppose I will see you at the Brownes' tea to-morrow? . . . Yes, they are always awful, but I shall go, I think. If you don't, people think you haven't been invited. Good-bye.

I'll take these—I want them charged—Mr. Faulkner knows me. . . . Yes, Mr. Faulkner. . . . What? This isn't Faulkner's store? Well, I thought it looked

strange when I came in. I would just like to know why that floor-walker didn't tell me this wasn't Faulkner's when I first entered! I never get my shoes anywhere else. . . . No, I wouldn't take them now. And here you have wasted all my time—under—under—false pretences—while my poor husband is lying ill at home! I consider you have taken great advantage of me. . . . Good-afternoon!

Another Point of View

Another Point of View

HERE I am, darning socks—I never thought I should ever descend to anything so unromantic. And there Tom sits by the fire, reading the paper—such an ungraceful pose, too—and not paying the least attention to me. Oh, dear! married life is so different from what I fancied it to be! Nothing but old bothers about butchers and grocers and servants and—things. Ouch! I have pricked my finger again.

In my girlish dreams, I used to see Tom and myself wandering through beautiful groves, hand-in-hand, for the

rest of our lives, picking wood violets, all the year round. Oh no, we couldn't do that in winter. Well, in winter I could imagine him kneeling at my feet all day long, begging for a kiss—Tom used to do that sort of thing very nicely —the begging, I mean. Now, I couldn't picture him in such a position. He actually grabs me and kisses me in a noisy fashion! I am beginning to believe Tom doesn't understand my nature —my aspirations, the love of the beautiful and poetic. Tom is so material. He doesn't seem to care at all about cultivating his higher ego—I think that is what it is called. Perhaps, after all, I have made a mistake. I believe I should have married a man of artistic temperament —one that would appeal to my most exalted sensibilities—one that wouldn't

expect me to darn socks! Ugh! There, I have stuck my finger for the eighteenth time.

I don't believe I am as happy as I have thought I was. Lots of people said I should not have married a man so much older than myself. Maybe some of those people were right, though I remember how angry I was at the time I heard it. Oh, dear! I wonder how many times I have sighed this evening.

What's that noise? There it is again. Goodness! what can it be? It's a snore! How perfectly disgusting! It is positively insulting! Oh, de— There, I nearly sighed again. Well, I just won't!

Tom is certainly getting stout—so prosaic. Horrors! I can see, over the top of his chair, a wrinkle of fat in the

back of his neck! That is death to all sentiment forever! And, upon my soul, I believe I see two gray hairs—and, yes, that looks like the beginning of a bald spot. I never can stand that; and if it gets to be a pink bald spot, I shall die!

How superbly that young tenor sang "Lohengrin" last night! How heavenly to marry a man like that, who would sing to you from morning till night, and, of course, never think about things to eat, or be annoyed if breakfast was delayed an hour or so, and make a fuss on account of being late down-town. Ah, what a paradise life would be, mated with one like that! And I couldn't fancy a Lohengrin with a bald spot, or wearing holes in his socks! Ouch! I won't have any fingers left if I don't stop pricking them.

Oh, dear, it is a sad, sad world—nothing but trouble!

Well, I've heard people of experience say you are really happier and certainly better off when you reach the utterly indifferent stage. I am sure I have got there, and I think—oh yes, I am sure it suits me exactly. There's Tom, evidently perfectly indifferent towards me. No, no! I didn't mean that. No, I don't want him to feel indifferent towards me—not at all. I shouldn't care for that, in the least. Of course, there is no reason why Tom *should* feel indifferent towards me. I am quite sure I am all any man could demand in a wife. Tom never finds fault with me, and that must be because I am perfect. I didn't exactly mean that—I meant I must be as near perfection as any wife *can* be. Oh no,

Tom has no reason to be other than quite satisfied with me.

Still, it seems strange that he should sleep when I am right here. Oh, but that's absurd! And yet this is my birthday, and he's forgotten all about it. I am so glad I am indifferent—I don't care at all! I shouldn't mind, even if Tom were to flirt with some other woman; it wouldn't disturb me in the least. Now, I come to think of it, Tom levelled the opera-glasses three times towards that horrid Mrs. Lorimer last night, at the opera. I remember, distinctly, it was three times, though my back was turned at the moment. I wonder if he thinks she is better-looking than I. She doesn't dress as well—and she hasn't a particle of taste, and she is downright vulgar, and I am pretty sure I have heard things

about her. Anyhow, if I haven't, I will! And she's stupid, and I hate her—I hate her!

Tom! No, I mustn't disturb him. There, I'll move the screen before the fire; I'm sure he is too warm. No wonder he sleeps—he is so tired. That's from "Lohengrin" last night. He did not feel at all like going, and only went to please me. How good he is to me! And he does look awfully well in evening-dress. Yes, he is really getting gray—poor darling, worrying over my extravagance, I'll warrant. And gray hair is so distinguished. No, he isn't bald, after all. That was only the shadow from the fire-light. And I do hate thin men. He's never cross, and I know I am often so disagreeable. Tom, wake up; I want to tell you—no, I want you to tell me how nice I am.

. . . Oh, Tom, you are mussing my hair! And Tom, what are you putting on my finger? For my birthday? . . . Oh, Tom, what a beauty—I was just dying for a ring like that. Tom, darling, you are the best man in the whole world!

Mis' Deborah Has a Visitor

Mis' Deborah has a Visitor

Mis' Deborah is seated by a table in her kitchen. Her elbow rests on the table, and her hand is pressed to her cheek as though in pain. A knock is heard.

WHO'S there? . . . Why, Sarah Jane, walk right in —yer did give me a turn. I'm glad ter see yer. I was jest a-thinkin', I feel that *de*pressed, I'd be tickled ter death ter see my worst enemy.

. . . Yes, I'm feelin' pore—it's the nooroligy again. . . . Does it look so red? . . . No, 'tain't fever. It's where I had my

jaw tied up with salt pork sprinkled in red pepper. Mis' Phipps she told me 'bout it. Her husband's brother used to suffer terrible—same's I do. He said there wa'n't nothin' give him so much comfort when he got it real bad. Tie yer face up at night, good and snug, and in the mornin' it's 'most all gone.—Take off yer bunnit and make yerself ter hum. . . . Turned yer bow again, 'ain't yer? Queer how some folks will have sech luck with them common ribbons. I don't a mite. This is the third time, ain't it? . . . Yes, 'tis, Sarah Jane. . . . Now jest see here—yer got it three years ago last spring, the day after Malviny Love was tuck with the measles, fer Marthy Pratt's weddin', and the next year yer turned it fer the Baptist Sunday-school picnic, and then fer Mis' Gowdey's fun'ral, and now yer done it again. . . .

Oh no, course I didn't, Sarah Jane; yer jest fergot.

Well, as I was tellin' yer 'bout Mis' Phipps' husband's brother — sech a nice man, strictly temperance and a good provider. Well, after he went to the city he got the nooroligy so bad he took on dretful. Mis' Phipps says while she was down there visitin' his folks she woke up very late one night—'bout ten o'clock —and heard a kind of moanin' sound. Course she thought it must be burglars, at that hour, and up she got to go an' hunt. Well, she went out to what they call the dinin'-room (they have a sep'rate room to eat in—the kitchen ain't good enough for 'em). There was Ephraim a-drinkin' out of a black bottle. He said it was his nooroligy had tuck him so bad again, and their hired girl had et up all

the pork, and so he had jest found this med'cine he'd had put away in a trunk. He was sufferin' awful, Mis' Phipps said; he could hardly stan' up. She says he was tuck with a spell 'most ev'ry night while she was there. Terrible sad.

Do you smell anythin' burnin', Sarah Jane? My land, I hope 'tain't them pie-plant pies. Wait till I look. . . . No, 'twa'n't. Sech a sight o' cookin', with this hayin' goin' on. Seems 's if yer never could fill them men up. . . .

I don't b'lieve in this city visitin', anyhow. Sorter turns folks' heads. Mis' Phipps ain't never ben the same sence. She ain't the only one, neither. . . . No, I think my say; I don't care to repeat it. . . . Well, what do you think o' Susie Tucker sence she come back from visitin' her city kin? Sech airs! I can't understand

Anne Tucker's lettin' her go on so. Soon's Susie got home, nothin' would do but her pa'd got ter buy her a real hand-painted picter ter go in their best room. . . . I knew you'd think 'twas terrible. But that ain't all—jest wait. They've got a store carpet for the settin'-room! They're awful set up 'bout it. Anne took me in ter show me, and, land sakes! she wouldn't open the blinds till she'd spread *The Farmer's Guide* all over the floor so's the sun couldn't tech it fer a minnit. . . . Yes, 'twas han'some—sorter dark plum-color with wreaths of yeller roses on it. That ain't all yet. Miss Susie had to have two books and a red plush album ter go on their marble-top centre-table. Her pa hitched right up and went up-street and jest told 'em he wanted two of the best books in the shop ter go on their

table in the parlor. . . . One of e'm I never heard of before—'bout a man called Dant —D-a-n-t-e. It's all 'bout the internal regions and hell-fire. I don't think it's 't all the proper kind o' book to have in the house, with a young girl 'round; but they seemed to set a sight o' store by it at the book place. They said 'twas what was called a standard work. Ole man Tucker 'lowed *he* didn't know what 't meant, and asked my 'pinion. I said 'twas plain 'nough—'twas one o' them fancy books to go on one o' them little brass standards —a sorter easel. Well, when it come to pickin' out the second book, Tucker spunked up some and said he was goin' to have somethin' *he* could enjoy—he s'posed they'd never buy no more books so long's they lived. So he took that noble work, *Afflicted Man's Companion.*

It's dretful han'some and full o' high oppressive thoughts. . . .

I s'pose yer heard 'bout ole Si Watkins bein' tuck with another o' his dyin' spells? . . . Yer didn't? Well, Sarah Jane, yer never do seem to know nothin'. I never seek information myself, but there ain't much goes on in this here town I don't know 'bout.—'S I said, he was tuck with one o' his dyin' spells las' Tuesday night. —Now wait; was it Tuesday or was it Wednesday? Well, I know 'twas *the* day or the day before Mis' Wheatley was tuck down with one o' her chills an' sent fer me. Now, lemme see—yes, 'twas on a Wednesday. Si'd gone up ter bed enjoyin' the same pore health he always does, and— No, 'twa'n't Wednesday, neither—'twas a Tuesday, jest 's I said at first. Well, Mis' Latimer said he'd et a

light supper—only six flannen cakes and some fried pork and two cups o' coffee and a few fried cakes. He hadn't had much of an app'tite lately, and he couldn't eat hearty 'cept he was hungry. He said, as he went out ter feed the chickens, he felt a sorter weight on his chest. 'S I said, he went up ter bed 'bout dark, and pretty soon he was tuck with the worst spell o' dyin' he ever had. . . . Die? No. I won't say they wished he would, but it's pretty hard ter have a man o' his years up an' dyin' ev'ry now an' then 'thout its ever comin' ter nothin'. —Then course yer didn't hear 'bout young Si's nose? . . . Well, I say, "cast thy bread upon the waters." Yer remember his nose always bein' bent ter one side, 'count o' that kick he got from the ox he was yokin'? Talk 'bout the unscruta-

ble workin's o' Providence! Yer won't b'lieve it, but las' week that same ox kicked him t'other side o' the nose, an' now it's straight again 's ever. Yer'd never know it hed been teched, 'cept it trembles a little when he stands in a draught. . . .

Did yer go ter the medical lecture up ter the opry-house? . . . No, I didn't, neither, but Hiram went. He bought one o' the bottles o' med'cine the man talked 'bout. Wonderful stuff. I take it. I'll show it ter yer. Wait till I fetch it. . . . Land sakes! I can't hardly reach it —the rheumaticks give me sech a twinge ev'ry time I try ter raise my arms. . . . Can yer? Thanks, Sarah Jane.—I don't know where I left my specs. Lend me yours. My! Your glasses are a sight older 'n mine. . . . Well, o' course. Listen what

it says. . . . What's it good fer? Why, fer what ails yer. It describes my symptoms exact. Here's a letter writ by a lady out in Washin'ton Territory, and one from Yucatan, and one from South America. You see the med'cine's very widespread. It says 'twill cure any ailment in two doses. This lady writes: "I have used your wonderful pain-killer for thirteen years, and expect to use it thirteen more, the Lord sparing me, but I have no fear of death as long as I carry a bottle of your wonderful invention with me. Yesterday our cat got scalded with hot fat and it took all the fur off its back. I instantly applied freely your pain-killer, and the cat has lain very quiet ever since."—You see, Sarah Jane, there ain't nothin' 'twon't do. Here's how you tell how you feel: "Do you feel tired on

going to bed at night? Do you feel a sense of fulness after eating? Are you low-spirited? Do little things annoy you? Are you always afraid something is going to happen? Do certain people affect you unpleasantly? Do you feel a disinclination to exertion? If you recognize any of these symptoms you are on the downward path to the grave. Make haste and commence on Dr. Bibble's pain-killer at once and vanquish death." Elegant language, Sarah Jane. "Two doses will effect a complete cure. Six bottles, two dollars." Yes, wonderful stuff. The man said 'twas used by the President and all the ministers in the country. I was goin' ter take some over ter Mis' Reynolds fer her little boy, but I kinder hate ter take the cork out, I set so much store by it. . . . Why, yes, he's

ben awful sick again — sorter spasms. Mis' Reynolds seems ter think he's some better, but I don't think he's goin' ter live very long. I told her she'd better be prepared fer the worst.

Mis' Sims 's learnin' her little girl sech stylish manners. She learns them to her out of a book—somethin' called sociable etyquette. They was ter supper t'other night. I won't say Mis' Sims wanted her ter show off her new manners, but—well, 't enny rate, I asked her if she would have a cup o' tea, and this is what she said—I got her ter say it over after supper, so's I could write it down. Sez I, "Clarissy, will you have milk an' sugar in your tea?" Sez she, "Milk, if cream; if not, no. Sugar, if lump; if not, no. Out or in, in or out, it makes no materials." I do love han'some language. Her mother's

goin' ter spoil her with her stravagance. Bought her a new pair o' white lisle-thread gloves, jest 's she's learnt ter hold her hands so's the darns in the old ones didn't show!

Next fall Mis' Sims 's ter have her learn art, and soon's she's finished it and has her first long dress Mis' Sims 's goin' ter take her to the mountains for a whole week, for a summer vacation! Course Mis' Sims has travelled a good deal herself. 'Fore she was married her father used ter take her ev'ry year to the seashore ter spend a day.

That was terrible 'bout Mis' Dimmick's new eye, wa'n't it? . . . Yer didn't hear? Land o' goodness! Yer don't seem ter know nothin', Sarah Jane. Well, her sister's husband's step-nephew works in what you call a optican's store—some-

thin' to do with eyes; an' he said he could pick her out a dretful nice eye that could do everythin' but see. Well, the eye come, but it didn't seem to fit real well—sorter small; but she was that proud of it she was set she'd wear it ter Sunday meetin', whether or no. Durin' the hymn she got singin' pretty hard, and sez I right then, "Pride goeth before a fall." Well, she must have bulged herself, for, flip, out it rolled onto the floor, and her little niece stepped on it and squashed it ter flinders. Course she ordered another right off—she was bound she'd have it fer the Dobbins christenin'. The eye come, but, bless you! 'twa'n't blue 't all, but black. We all thought she wouldn't wear it; but, lawsy sakes! she's so set on style, and go she would with that eye. It did give me such a

turn when she come walkin' in with her own blue eye and that store black one. Well, soon's she commenced to cry—you know she always will cry at christenin's —soon's she begun to cry, that eye swum right down her face and onto the floor. 'Twas jest the same size as t'other one, and she'd wrote 'em she wanted a whole half-size larger. Course that Towser dog of the Dobbinses saw it first thing, and up and swallowed it right off. Now Mis' Dimmick says she wants the dog killed so's she can get her eye back, and Mis' Dobbins's folks say she hadn't orter wore a loose eye inter their house, anyhow. Don't know how they're goin' ter settle it.

How'd yer enjoy yerself ter Aunt 'Liza's fun'ral? . . . Did yer? I think 'twas a shameful display o' money; that's

my 'pinion. I know they've ben savin' and plannin' fer this 'casion fer the last ten year; but even so, she'll be a great loss ter the community. Last year she knitted eighty-nine wash-cloths fer the heathen—she'd hoped ter make it a hundred 'fore she was called. They'll miss her. . . . Still, I can't change my 'pinion—I think 'twas a shameful display o' money. I'm jest burnin' ter tell yer, Sarah Jane, but I won't. . . . No, wild horses wouldn't drag it from me. . . . Well — well — did yer notice the silver handles on the coffin? Marked with the gentleman's name that made 'em — "Sterling." I've heard tell he puts his own name ter ev'ry piece he thinks worth anything. Well, I 'lowed *I'd* paid fer most o' them handles. Yes, ma'am, I jest cal'lated this way—now when I send

'Mealy over ter borrow a cup o' molasses or brown sugar, they never send back full; but when *I* return, *I* send full! So I says ter myself that they'd saved 'nough off me in sugar and molasses alone ter pay fer them handles!

Some say she made a dretful han'some corpse, but I have my 'pinion 'bout that, too. I say 'twas sinful, her bein' all tricked out an' lookin' so gay at her own fun'ral. Plain black was good enough while she was alive—and bein' dressed up as though she was goin' ter a party! . . . Well, yes, Sarah Jane, there is some truth in that—it was her own party, in a way. And what do yer think of their takin' the glass cover off the wax flowers? Jest ter show money wa'n't no object ter *them!* They didn't care, like common folks, if they did get dust on 'em. If that ain't

temptin' Providence! Yer noticed the corpse had on that red carnelian ring? I think you'll be s'prised when I tell you 'bout that. Well, the day before she went, she divided up all her things and give 'em away. There was some dissatisfaction, I b'lieve. I think myself 'twould have been more 'propriate to have given little Mary Ellen her stuffed parrot, an' Mis' Babcock her best black silk, 'ceptin' vicey vercey. But you know she always was sot. Well, when it come to that carnelian ring, she said she'd given up ev'rything else but that ring, and that she was goin' ter take with her!

. . . Oh, must yer be goin', Sarah Jane? I have enjoyed yer visit so much. Yer talkin' always does cheer me up. . . . Good-bye. Mind the pineys as you go by.

They will creep up over the border. . . . Sarah Jane, come back. I jest remembered—'twas a Tuesday 'stead o' Wednesday, jest 's I said at first, ole Si had his dyin' spell. Good-bye.

The Pudding

The Pudding

NO, no, Mary, don't take it away—put it on the side-table, where we can see it. Half of the enjoyment of a pudding is in looking at it. Don't you think so, dear? . . . You horrid thing! Well, you won't say so when you taste *my* pudding. . . .

Um, um—yes, I did—all myself—out of the cook-book. . . . Mary never touched it—I knew you would say that—I even sent her out of the kitchen when I made it. Mary, you never saw this pudding till this minute, did you? . . . So, now!

Mary, Mr. Clyde will serve the soup

to-night. . . . It's because of my hands, dear; I burned them both pretty badly. . . . Well, wasn't it better to burn them than the pudding? It has to be one or the other. . . . I can't explain why—why do your old stocks go up and down? Answer that. . . .

Mary, it's so hot in here you will have to open one of the windows. . . . It is, dear. . . . Well, it *is*. If you had been in the kitchen all day making a pudding you'd feel warm! . . . Oh, all right. Mary, put the window down. Mr. Clyde *thinks* he feels a draught. . . . No, dear, of course not—I don't mind. . . .

On my nose? Oh yes, that's just a smut from the oven—I couldn't get it off. . . . I didn't have time to fix my hair. . . . I simply couldn't change my dress after working in that kitchen so many

hours. . . . That? That's just a little egg slopped on while I was beating them—very wasteful. . . . I never knew you to be so critical before. You used to say I always looked lovely, *before* we were married. . . . I always did look lovely—then? . . . Harry Clyde, I do think you are too—

Mary, you will have to take the pudding out of here and carry it down to the ice-box. The recipe said, keep it in a cool place till served, and I wouldn't risk it in this hot room a moment longer. . . .

Of course not, dear, I don't want the window open if you are going to take cold. You know when you had your last attack of bronchitis you never stirred out of this house for five mortal days! . . . I didn't mean that, Harry; how you take me up. Of course I *love* to have you home day-

times—I was only thinking how *you* suffered. . . . That's just the way; the harder I try to please you, the more you —well, all right—

Why, Mary, what are you standing there with the pudding for? I told you to take it down-stairs. . . . I'm not cross, dear—I'm only nervous—can't you tell the difference? Mary is so stupid sometimes. . . .

I can't eat any soup—I'm not hungry. Why doesn't Mary answer this bell—it does take her so long. Good Heavens! Did you hear that crash? Mary, what was that—did you drop the pudding? . . . Oh, only Master Georgie falling out of his crib—I thought it was the pudding. Tell him he must lie quiet till—till this pudding is over. Mary, Mary, come back. You had better bring it in here—

I am afraid it will get chilled. . . . No, no, Mary, the pudding, not the baby!

I know it, dear—she will bring the rest of the dinner as soon as she gets the pudding up here again. . . . What kind of a day did you have down-town, to-day? . . . Is that so—I'm glad . . . Why, no, I haven't been out all day; I made the pudding. . . . Yes, your mother did call, but I couldn't see her. . . . Well, of course, it would have been different if it had been *my* mother! Would you want *your* mother to see me looking like this? . . . I should hope not. Yes, it was my day at home, but I never thought of it until I was in the middle of the pudding, and then I couldn't get out of it! . . .

Why, Mary, I told you to bring the pudding first, not the dinner. Now, you will have to take those things back. . . .

I can't help it—it won't take her but a moment, dear, and I am afraid to leave the pudding a fraction of a second longer in too cold an atmosphere. . . .

It's only because I want you to have your pudding right—I'm trying in every way to make you happy and do my duty by you, and every time I— . . . I know you didn't mean anything, Harry, I know it's your way— . . . Now, don't say anything more about it. . . . I'm not mad one bit. . . . Well, I can't help how I look—I'm *not* mad. . . . Of course I love you. . . . No, you can't kiss me—Harry, sit down. Mary might see you, and what would she think? Here she comes.

Mary, let me look at it—it looks as though it was going down! . . . Oh, Harry, don't make such silly jokes. . . .

Well, it doesn't cheer me up a bit. Mary, I think if you open the window just a crack— . . . I said just a crack, dear, and put a chair on the pudding—now, don't laugh, Harry, you know what I mean. . . . Why shouldn't it look brown?—it's a brown pudding. . . . I didn't mean it was called that, but it is supposed to *look* brown. The cook-book said to cook it till a rich brown. . . . I don't call it black—it's a dark brown. . . . Very well. Mary, bring the dinner—Mr. Clyde is very hungry to-night. . . .

The euchre club? Don't say it's this evening? . . . Well, I can't go—I don't feel at all well. And, of course, you wouldn't think of going without me? . . . Indeed, you won't go and say I am ill—I'm all right and—Mary, before you pass the potatoes, just put that window down

—not all the way—just a little farther closed. . . .

No, I can't eat a thing—I don't feel as though I ever should again . . . Mr. Clyde wants more bread, Mary. You are eating a great deal this evening, aren't you, dear? . . .

Mary, you can bring me the pudding, and I will serve it while Mr. Clyde finishes his dinner—I don't know anything more to do with it. It is rather blacker—browner than I thought. You know, Mary, I told you to watch it and not let it get too rich in color. Mary, take it down-stairs again and make a little meringue and put it over the top, and then it won't show where it is burned. . . . It would taste burned just the same? Oh, I suppose it would. Well, perhaps it will be all right when it is

cut. Give me a spoon. . . . [*Carves frantically.*]

It's not tough—it's not tough at all, Harry. It's a trifle solid, but I detest a loose pudding. Mary, will you bring me a knife—one of the sharp ones from the kitchen. . . .

It isn't meant to be one of those high puddings, Harry. . . . Well, the top sticks up that way and the rest is in the bottom, because— The top is always on the top, isn't it? You can't explain why a pudding does things—nobody can. It's all the fault of the eggs, Mary—you didn't beat them long enough. You know I told you at the time— . . .

Oh, Harry, how disgusting — they're raisins. There, now, eat it. Don't poke it about like that. . . . No, they are not rubber rings — it's cut up bana-

nas. Taste it. You needn't hold your breath.

You don't like it— . . . No, you don't! . . . Well, if you could just look at your face, you would know whether you liked it or not. You needn't try to deceive me. . . . Now, you don't have to say you do. [*Tearfully.*] I don't feel badly a bit—no, I don't—I knew you wouldn't like it—that's why I made it. [*She bursts into tears.*] Oh, dear! I wor—wor—worked so—har—har—hard—over — that — pu — pu — pudding. . . . Oh, dear — I wi — wi — wish I wa — wa — was dead! [*She sobs convulsively.*] And I wi—wi—wish you we—we—were dead! [*More sobs.*] And I wi—wi—wish we were all de—de—dead. [*She sits up and dabs her eyes with her napkin.*] No, I don't—I'll live just to pu—pu—

punish you! I'll make you eat every speck of that pu—pu—pudding and then you'll *wish* you were dead. So, now! [*Renewed sobs.*]

The Year After

The Year After

SCENE. *The veranda of a summer hotel on the shores of a broad stretch of water. Below, in the harbor, is gathered a concourse of yachts, the reflections of their lights glittering intermittently as the boats rise and fall with the motion of the waves. From a distant ballroom echoes the strains of a violin. Over all, a moon, high in the heavens, sends its steady illumination. A woman, clad in white, and bearing a huge bouquet of roses, enters at left. She speaks off.*

YES, Gilbert—in a moment. I want just one more breath of this divine night air. [*She advances slowly to the veranda rail and gazes pensively down at the yachts. At the same instant a man enters right. She hears his step and turns involuntarily.*]

Why—why, *Jeff*—I beg your pardon —*Mr.* Cryder. . . . Oh yes, but that was *last* year, and this is—the year after. [*She turns away for a brief interval and buries her face in the roses. She is visibly perturbed as she speaks again.*]

Do you know, I—I. Well, I suppose you think I— Oh, dear, I mean, I believe you are absurd enough to think that I

am behaving as though I were embarrassed—but I'm not—just because we had a little flirtation last summer. . . . Now, you don't think so, do you? . . . You had better not. [*She is silent for a moment, and then speaks with mock earnestness.*]

But, do you know, there were times when you appeared so desperate that you might have deceived a less discriminating young woman into believing you were in earnest! [*She laughs lightly.*] . . . Now, don't, please. . . . I can imagine just what you are going to say—and—I've heard it so many times before—you men are so painfully alike when it comes to making love. I have often wondered why you don't call a meeting and arrange a few new expressions! [*Then, seriously, putting forth her hand.*] You haven't shaken hands

with me yet — you can if you want to. . . . Absurd. . . . But what a coincidence—that we should both have returned here. What brings you? . . . The thought of— Now, please— [*Gayly.*] Against the rules in the new game. You know we must start all over again—that is, if you care to start— . . . What? It's the finish and not the start that interests you? [*She laughs.*] Very pretty. In the mean time, if you've quite finished with my hand, I'd like to borrow it back again. Thank you. [*She withdraws her hand.*] What are the chances? Well, if you knew what to expect there wouldn't be any chances, would there? Besides, now —[*She becomes suddenly grave, lowers her head, and toys with the ribbon attached to her bouquet.*] Of course, now — there couldn't be any. [*She raises her eyes to*

his hesitatingly. Her glance rests for an instant, while a puzzled look grows on her countenance.]

Why, when did you get back from those horrible Philippines? . . . And you came directly here? . . . Yes, of course, an excellent place for you to recuperate in— [*Hastily.*] Then you have seen no one —you have not heard? . . . I—I— Oh, nothing, I was just thinking what a colossal amount of gossip you will have to listen to.

You look wonderfully well, despite your wound. . . . Please don't—somehow I—I don't like to hear that sort of nonsense from you— And you know perfectly what I mean—I'm not talking about your *heart*, but the pistol-shot wound in your shoulder—or gunshot, or whatever it was those barbarians tried

to blow you up with. I read all about you, and, oh, I was so proud to think I knew you! How brave you were— . . . I don't care what you say—it's true.

Tell me about your hurt. . . . And you really would have died if it had not been for the careful nursing? . . . Who took care of you? . . . [*Coldly.*] Indeed! I didn't think they permitted women nurses out there. . . . Oh, I see. [*A pause.*] Was this person young? . . . I suppose she was pretty? . . . Naturally, you must have grown very fond of any one who was so kind to you and—so good-looking! . . . An angel? [*She laughs contemptuously.*] I have often wondered why a man instantly placards a woman as "an angel" if she does him the least service! . . . I presume you keep up a correspondence? . . . [*With an entire change of manner.*]

She's going to be married to one of the officers? . . . Now, why didn't you tell me that before? . . . You didn't think it would interest me? Well, of course, it doesn't. . . . But I hope you will send her the loveliest wedding-present imaginable—she deserves it! [*She turns to her companion and regards him critically.*]

You have changed a great deal since last summer, Jeff. Somehow, you look ever so much bigger, and broader, and browner, and — more serious — and yet it's only twelve months ago. . . . [*Slowly, gazing out over the water.*] Yes, a year does sometimes make a great difference.

It is a strange fatality that should have brought us both here again—I assure you I had no idea I should meet you. . . . And I know very well you did

not come back in search of me. . . . Why did I come? [*She smiles and hesitates.*] That is very hard to answer—I scarcely know myself—I think a vague longing to taste this salt air again. And it seemed to me I was just a bit tired of the world—and everything and every one in it—and I wanted to be where I could find solitude once in a while. . . . Perhaps, but that, too, was a year ago, and since I have grown rather tolerant of my own society—at times. And, do you know, I had a most extravagant longing to find once more some of those delicious little nooks 'way out there on the rocks. . . . Did we? Yes, I believe we did discover them together. . . .

Tell you about myself? [*Her animation dies, and she speaks with a tinge of bitterness.*] I'm the same inconsequen-

tial will-o'-the-wisp, fancying some day I am going to accomplish something, be of a little use, perhaps—and then I make a mad dash, only to find I am going in the wrong direction—and have to come all the way back—alone. I am afraid I am one of those unfortunate creatures who needs a balance-wheel! [*With an impatient gesture and a shrug of the shoulders she moves forward.*]

How beautiful the lights look down on the yachts—the red and the green reflections in the water and the moonlight beyond. [*From within her name is called. She starts and pales.*]

I—I—must go. Good-night. [*As she turns to leave, the music ceases for an instant, and then recommences with a pathetic love song.*]

Why, Jeff, what is that they are play-

ing? Don't you remember — that last night at the regatta ball? Some one had asked them to play it during the intermission. We were sitting on that old gun-carriage down by the water's edge, watching the lights out there on the yachts —just like to-night. I can see it all again. [*She speaks excitedly, her eyes sparkle, and the color comes and goes in her cheeks.*]

Back of us the club-house in gala attire, and crowded with the gayest of throngs; among the trees the rows and rows of Japanese lanterns, strung from limb to limb; and in the grass the tiny colored lights that twinkled like fireflies— I shall never forget it—it was fairy-land. [*Gradually her enthusiasm subsides, she turns timidly to her companion, starts to speak, stops, and finally, summoning courage, continues.*]

Mr. Cryder, I am going to say something to you, though you may think it very shocking of me—I cannot help it. You—you were guilty of great cruelty that night, and had I not been warned against you, and known of my own accord we were only playing a little comedy, your seeming sincerity would have convinced me beyond anything. . . . No, you must not stop me—let me tell it, now I have begun.

That night, just before we left for the regatta ball, Agnes Wayne came to me and said she had something she must tell me. She said, through her friendship, she would spare me the pain and humiliation she felt coming—that I must not be blinded by your devotion—it was only amusement to you—you were notoriously a flirt — and for you to say — you loved

a woman—meant nothing at all. So—when you told me—what you did—I only laughed, and sent you away. [*She pauses.*] Ah, Mr. Cryder, it's a bad kind of amusement, this playing with hearts. It is a dangerous game. Of course, it was all right between us, for we understood each other. But I am going to ask you, from now on, not to say to any other woman what you did to me that night—unless you *mean* it, for, some time, she might care, and you would do her an unspeakable injury.

Oh, I did not intend to say all this. [*Her voice breaks.*] But the — music brought—everything back so keenly. . . .

What are you saying? . . . It is I—I who have been deceived? It was the trick of a jealous woman—Agnes Wayne? [*With supreme contempt.*] And you ex-

pect me to believe this? Surely you have said and done enough already not to have— [*Again her voice trembles and she bends towards him.*]

But, oh, I want to believe you—I want to believe you! There, look into my eyes and tell me this is the truth. [*After a moment she draws back, her face radiant.*] I believe you! Then—then it was not a joke? . . . You meant all you said—that you—honestly loved me? [*As the full significance of this dawns upon her, her expression changes to a tragic intensity.*]

What a horrible—awful blunder! . . . Did I care? [*She endeavors to regain her composure and reply lightly.*] Why, of course not—I— Oh, I will say it—just once. Yes, I loved you with every beat of my heart—and all my soul—I could

not help it, even when I thought it all play to you. . . . No—no— [*She shrinks from him.*] Don't touch me—you don't understand. Let me tell it while I can. [*She speaks rapidly in a low tone, pausing occasionally to overcome her emotion.*]

The day after the regatta ball I returned to the city, and you—you never came. I longed to have you tell me again you loved me, even though I knew you did not mean it. And then—I—heard you had gone—away. Of course, you did not know I cared—and I loved you all the time.

I thought, perhaps, you might write—but no letter ever came. After a time nothing seemed to matter very much—nothing. And then—well, you remember Gilbert Allen; he was very good to me

all those dreadful weeks. So when he asked me to be his wife, and it was urged upon me, it did not seem to make any difference, and in January we were engaged— . . . No, wait—two months ago. [*She draws her glove from her left hand and holds it towards her companion. A plain gold ring shines on the third finger.*] That is he — calling me — good - bye. [*Crushed, she starts to go, her head drooped, the flowers trailing over her arm. She advances a few steps, pauses, and turns back, raises her head, stretches her arms towards him, and cries, in an agonized voice.*]

Oh, Jeff, I can't—I can't—I— [*She ceases, her eyes clinging to those of her companion. The utter hopelessness of the situation, as it penetrates her mind, mirrors itself in her grief-stricken countenance;*

her glance falls to the ground. Once more she turns, this time with her head high, her roses clasped to her breast, and thus, slowly, she goes out.]

Heard on the Beach

Heard on the Beach

WELL, my dear, I have been watching your bath-house for the last hour. I thought you were *never* coming out. It takes you so long to dress—but, then, it pays, for any one could tell the amount of time you spend on your toilettes—it shows. . . . If you don't mind—you are blushing just a little too much on your left cheek. . . . Take my handkerchief. . . . Sunburn? Oh yes; but how convenient!—it rubs off!

. . . Sleep last night? I don't think I closed my eyes ten minutes the entire

night. When I am once disturbed I cannot get to sleep again. . . . Thunder-storm? Why, no, there wasn't. . . . Well, that just annoys me. I shall ask Mr. Randall why he didn't wake me up—he knows I simply cannot sleep through a thunder-storm. . . . Oh no, I didn't tell you what disturbed me in the first place. . . . Indeed, I'm not going to tell. . . . No, I won't. . . . No, I will not. . . . Well, if you won't repeat it as coming from me. . . . You know, my room opens right on the piazza, the corner that's so dark at night, round by the dining-room. And, do you know, they begin to rattle those dishes at five o'clock in the morning! Perfectly senseless—I really believe they hire some one to bang them around just to annoy the guests. . . . Yes, I do. Where did I leave off? Oh yes! I hadn't been

in bed five minutes, and was so tired out and sleepy after rubbing in my flesh food. . . . My dear, why don't you use Madame Muller's preparations? You would look like a different woman. You would get rid of all those little lines about your eyes. I use them all, the food, and the cleaner, and the bleach, and the Perennial Youth Lotion, and the electric wrinkle-roller. There isn't a thing that roller won't do. If you have a double chin, it will rub it right off; and if you are thin, it will rub it right on!

Of course, I don't need any of these things at all, but I use them in case some day I might want them. I must give you her address. . . . It was rather peculiar how I came to go to her. It was one of the coldest days last winter, and I was in a drug store drinking ice-

cream soda. . . . *Do* you? I always take chocolate. Well, I saw a bottle of that Perennial Youth Lotion on the counter, and the picture of the woman on the advertisement looked so well I took the address and went straight down to Madame Muller's studio. They have the most wonderful before-and-after woman you ever saw! You go into this little room, and there she sits, a mass of wrinkles and the color of saffron. Then you go out, and they shut the door and give her a treatment with all the preparations. . . . No, you don't see it, but you wait, and in about fifteen minutes they open the door again and you go in and examine her. Well, my dear, there she sits in the same chair, dressed in the most stunning evening gown, holding a rose in her hand, and a palm on a table by her, and every

wrinkle gone! You would never believe it was the same woman. . . . Well, it was; for when you first see her she has a mole on her chin, and then, when you see her after the treatment, the mole is gone! That fixed me, and I've used those preparations ever since. I went down there three days in succession, and saw the same performance every time.

. . . Where did I leave off? Oh yes. I'd just gone to bed, and was so sleepy, when I heard voices, and then chairs dragged beneath my window. You may believe I was wide awake then, and got right up—not to listen, of course, but I wanted to hear what they said. I recognized the voices — that Bradley girl and young Wheatley. Mind you, two people, and I heard one rocking-chair rock—one chair, and two people! Of

course, I'd be the last one to say a word or even hint a thing against Minnie Bradley—she is such a very nice girl. I don't like her at all, but she's a nice girl. Still, that one rocking-chair! . . . There might have been a plain chair, but I didn't hear it.

. . . Oh, do you like it? It's nothing but an old rag—I didn't bring any of my good clothes this summer. I knew just the common sort of people we would meet here—I don't know where on earth they come from. . . . My dear, I didn't mean you—the idea! The whole place is so badly managed—the house just seems to run itself. I came only on Mr. Randall's account—it's so near the city, and he can go in and out every day, and the children like it. Why, where are they? Come here! Where have you

been? . . . Mud pies? Well, I should think so—just look at your faces! . . . You want mamma to take you bathing? No, the water is too cold. . . . Oh, Georgie Smith's nurse will take you? All right, you can go. Tell her to undress you and dress you, and then take you into luncheon, and then to bring you back to the beach in the afternoon. . . . Run along, my darlings. . . . No, you are too dirty to kiss. . . . I tell you, children are a care. . . . No, I haven't a nurse this year. It's not a matter of expense, you know, but somehow, in the summer, I don't care for a nurse. I just let them run wild—I think it's healthier.

. . . Yes, that's Mrs. Gregory. She was divorced from her first husband, and now she is trying to catch another man. . . . Do you really? I don't see how you

can say so; she hasn't a single good feature. . . . Her figure? Well, I wish you could have seen her before she had so much of it rubbed off—she was a sight! I know all about her. You see, we have the same masseuse—a French-woman. She's perfectly splendid—Miss O'Grady. . . . Well, I don't know, she says she's French. Miss O'Grady said she rubbed at least twenty-five pounds off that woman last winter. It came from drink! . . . I didn't exactly hear about it —I found it out. You see, when Miss O'Grady told me about Mrs. Gregory getting stouter, I said probably it came from drink—I saw her take a cocktail at a luncheon where we both were. . . . Yes, I did, too; it seemed so rude to refuse—and Miss O'Grady said without doubt that was it. So, that is how I came to

know. Awful for a woman, isn't it? I don't know what the men see in her, anyway. Now, Mr. Randall admires her very much, but I don't know why, for certainly that woman doesn't resemble me in the least!

. . . Good-morning, Miss Walton. You are looking as charming as ever. . . . Yes, you do—you always do. . . . Isn't she a fright? They say her father gambles. I don't know how true it is, but I believe it, just the same. I don't like her at all. . . . Do you honestly think she dresses well? She had that gown last summer —we were at the same place. She's got new insertion on it, and a different color under it, but I recognized it the first time she had it on here. You can't fool me on made-over clothes. Of course, I never wear them myself.

. . . Did you ever see such a house as ours for gossip? . . . I always hold that if you cannot say something good about anybody, don't say anything at all. Oh, look! There go the bride and groom. Did you ever see such a bathing-suit? Red flannel, trimmed with autumn leaves! I think at least she might have had orange blossoms. Don't they just make you ill with all that billing and cooing? Now, they are precisely the kind that will go on forever like that. Sickening! They have the cheapest room in the house. . . . Well, they have—I asked the clerk. Why, it's right next to yours. . . . A quarrel? . . . You heard it through the transom? Tell me all about it. . . . What did he say when she threw the soap-dish at him? . . . That's just it—when you see a couple so devoted, I

always say trouble isn't a hundred miles away.

. . . Yes, that horrid Mrs. Graham—I can't bear her. She always has a string of young men running after her. I shouldn't think her husband would allow it. There has been a good deal of talk about him, too. I imagine there will be some sort of a scandal before long. I am always suspicious of people till I find them out.

. . . The entertainment to-night? No, I sha'n't go—I think it is simply ridiculous charging fifty cents admission. . . . I know it's for charity, but why don't they make those on the programme pay? I'd like to know what they would do if they didn't have an audience to listen to them.

Of course, it isn't the money. It isn't

that—but I don't like the idea of paying. It makes me feel—well, funny. Besides, Mr. Randall is so tired out when he gets here at night he can't stand up—at least, he *says* he is, but he will go down in that old billiard-room and walk miles round that table, and insists it rests him more than sitting quietly on the piazza talking to me! Men are queer.

. . . Shoots up, and then down, and then across? You should never have gone in the water with it. . . . Sciatica, my dear. I had a woman who used to sew for me, and she suffered terribly. It was the most pitiful sight to see her sewing from half-past seven in the morning till half-past six at night. . . . Oh, I make them come early. . . . Well, it got so bad she finally had to sit with one leg stretched out in a chair, and then it

went into her teeth, and then, when it went into the other and she had to have them all out, I could not stand it—I am *so* sympathetic—and I told her if she starved to death I could not employ her any longer. . . . She finally died of it.

. . . My dear, I didn't mean to make you nervous—perhaps you will get over it—I certainly hope so; but your symptoms are precisely like hers. . . . Now, there was a certain liniment she used to use—it never did her a bit of good, but you might like to try it. I think I can find out the name—I have her sister's address. It is somewhere in Brooklyn. You see, she lived with her sister, and when she died she was owing me a half-day's work, and I went right over to see her about it. I'll write immediately after luncheon.

. . . My, you are in a hurry! I suppose you are going to dress again for luncheon. . . . I don't know what I would do here without you, you dear thing. . . . Good-bye; good-bye. . . . She is the hatefulest cat in the whole place!

THE END